

**IN THE CLAIMS**

The pending claims, including amended and new claims, are as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A carrying case for a portable electronic device comprising:
  - a plurality of wall portions defining a compartment for receiving the portable electronic device; and
  - a shock absorber associated with at least one of the wall portions, the shock absorber including a leaf spring extending substantially across a length defined by a side of the compartment and further including foam padding adjacent the leaf spring;
  - wherein the leaf spring is configured and dimensioned to absorb at least a portion of any forces transmitted through the wall portion to the portable electronic device.
2. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the leaf spring is a semi-rigid spring material.
3. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the leaf spring extends along a substantial portion of the wall portion.
4. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the wall portion extends from a first corner to a second corner, and the leaf spring extends substantially from the first corner to the second corner.
5. (Previously presented) A carrying case for a portable electronic device comprising:
  - a plurality of wall portions defining a compartment for receiving the portable electronic device; and
  - a shock absorber associated with at least one of the wall portions, the shock absorber including a leaf spring;
  - wherein the leaf spring is configured and dimensioned to absorb at least a portion of any forces transmitted through the wall portion to the portable electronic device;
  - wherein the wall portion extends from a first corner to a second corner, and the leaf spring extends substantially from the first corner to the second corner; and

wherein the leaf spring is substantially adjacent the wall portion only at the first corner and the second corner, and the leaf spring is spaced apart from the wall portion at points between the first corner and the second corner.

6. (Original) The carrying case of claim 5, wherein the leaf spring extends along an arcuate path between the first corner and the second corner.

7. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the shock absorber further includes foam padding surrounding at least a portion of the leaf spring.

8. (Previously presented) A carrying case for a portable electronic device comprising:

a plurality of wall portions defining a compartment for receiving the portable electronic device; and

a shock absorber associated with at least one of the wall portions, the shock absorber including a leaf spring;

wherein the leaf spring is configured and dimensioned to absorb at least a portion of any forces transmitted through the wall portion to the portable electronic device;

wherein the shock absorber further includes foam padding surrounding at least a portion of the leaf spring; and

wherein the leaf spring has first and second surfaces substantially opposed to one another, and the foam padding substantially conforms to at least one of the first and second surfaces.

9. (Original) The carrying case of claim 8, wherein the shock absorber includes a first layer of foam padding substantially conforming to the first surface, and a second layer of foam padding substantially conforming to the second surface.

10. (Original) The carrying case of claim 9, wherein the first and second layers of foam padding define a substantially boxed shape of the shock absorber.

11. (Previously presented) A carrying case for a portable electronic device comprising:

a plurality of wall portions defining a compartment for receiving the portable electronic device; and

a shock absorber associated with at least one of the wall portions, the shock absorber including a leaf spring;

wherein the leaf spring is configured and dimensioned to absorb at least a portion of any forces transmitted through the wall portion to the portable electronic device;

wherein the shock absorber further includes foam padding surrounding at least a portion of the leaf spring; and

wherein the foam padding is an open-cell foam.

12. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the leaf spring includes at least one reinforcing channel extending substantially longitudinally along the leaf spring.

13. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the leaf spring has a generally "W"-shaped cross-section.

14. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the leaf spring has a generally "U"-shaped cross-section.

15. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the leaf spring is plastic.

16. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the leaf spring is polycarbonate.

17. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the plurality of wall portions includes a bottom wall configured and dimensioned for resting on the ground, and the shock absorber is associated with the bottom wall.

18. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, further comprising a shoulder strap for hanging the carrying case from a user's shoulder.

19. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein the carrying case is a backpack.

20. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, further comprising a compartment configured and dimensioned to hold a power supply cable for the portable computer.

21. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, further comprising a compartment configured and dimensioned to hold computer accessories.

22. (Original) The carrying case of claim 1, wherein at least one of the wall portions is bound by a zipper that allows the compartment to be opened and closed.

23. (Currently amended) A carrying case for a portable computer, comprising:

a plurality of walls including a bottom wall configured and dimensioned to rest on the ground;

a compartment located within the carrying case for receiving the portable computer; and

a leaf spring located within the compartment proximate the bottom wall of the carrying case, the leaf spring extending substantially parallel to the bottom wall and extending substantially across a length defined by the bottom wall; and

a foam layer abutting the leaf spring;

wherein the leaf spring is configured and dimensioned to absorb at least a portion of any forces transmitted from the ground to the portable computer.

24. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, wherein the leaf spring is a semi-rigid spring material.

25. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, wherein the leaf spring extends along a substantial portion of the bottom wall.

26. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, wherein the bottom wall extends from a first corner to a second corner, and the leaf spring extends substantially from the first corner to the second corner.

27. (Previously presented) A carrying case for a portable computer, comprising:

a plurality of walls including a bottom wall configured and dimensioned to rest on the ground;

a compartment located within the carrying case for receiving the portable computer; and

a leaf spring located within the compartment proximate the bottom wall of the carrying case, the leaf spring extending substantially parallel to the bottom wall;

wherein the leaf spring is configured and dimensioned to absorb at least a portion of any forces transmitted from the ground to the portable computer;

wherein the bottom wall extends from a first corner to a second corner, and the leaf spring extends substantially from the first corner to the second corner; and

wherein the leaf spring is substantially adjacent the bottom wall only at the first corner and the second corner, and the leaf spring is spaced apart from the bottom wall at points between the first corner and the second corner.

28. (Original) The carrying case of claim 27, wherein the leaf spring extends along an arcuate path between the first corner and the second corner.

29. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, further including foam padding surrounding at least a portion of the leaf spring.

30. (Original) The carrying case of claim 29, wherein the foam padding is an open-cell foam.

31. (Previously presented) A carrying case for a portable computer, comprising:  
a plurality of walls including a bottom wall configured and dimensioned to rest on the ground;  
a compartment located within the carrying case for receiving the portable computer;  
a leaf spring located within the compartment proximate the bottom wall of the carrying case, the leaf spring extending substantially parallel to the bottom wall; and  
foam padding surrounding at least a portion of the leaf spring;  
wherein the leaf spring is configured and dimensioned to absorb at least a portion of any forces transmitted from the ground to the portable computer; and  
wherein the foam conforms to the leaf spring and defines a substantially box shape around the leaf spring.

32. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, wherein the leaf spring includes at least one reinforcing channel extending substantially longitudinally along the leaf spring.

33. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, wherein the leaf spring is a semi-rigid spring material.

34. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, wherein the leaf spring is polycarbonate.

35. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, further comprising a shoulder strap for hanging the carrying case from a user's shoulder.

36. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, wherein the carrying case is a backpack.

37. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, further comprising a compartment configured and dimensioned to hold a power supply cable for the portable computer.

38. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, further comprising a compartment configured and dimensioned to hold computer accessories.

39. (Original) The carrying case of claim 23, wherein the compartment further comprises an opening extending through one of the exterior walls of the carrying case, the opening configured and dimensioned for passage of the portable computer therethrough.

40. (Currently amended) A carrying case for a portable electronic device comprising:

a plurality of wall portions defining a compartment for receiving the portable electronic device; and

a shock absorber associated with at least one of the wall portions, the shock absorber comprising a spring disposed between a plurality of layers of foam padding, the spring extending a length defined by a side of the compartment;

wherein the spring is configured and dimensioned to absorb at least a portion of forces transmitted through the wall portions.

41. (Previously presented) The carrying case of claim 40, wherein the spring is substantially arc shaped.

42. (Previously presented) The carrying case of claim 41, wherein the spring comprises at least one channel.

43. (Previously presented) The carrying case of claim 41, wherein the spring comprises a generally "U"-shaped cross-section.

44. (Previously presented) The carrying case of claim 40, wherein the side extends from a first corner to a second corner, and free ends of the spring are disposed proximate the corners.

45. (Previously presented) The carrying case of claim 44, wherein a portion of the spring is spaced from the side.

46. (Previously presented) The carrying case of claim 44, wherein the layers of padding substantially conform to surface of the spring between the corners.

47. (Previously presented) The carrying case of claim 40, wherein the shock absorber is disposed proximate a bottom wall of the plurality of wall portions.

48. (Previously presented) The carrying case of claim 40, wherein the layers of padding substantially conform to the spring and define a substantially box shape around the spring.